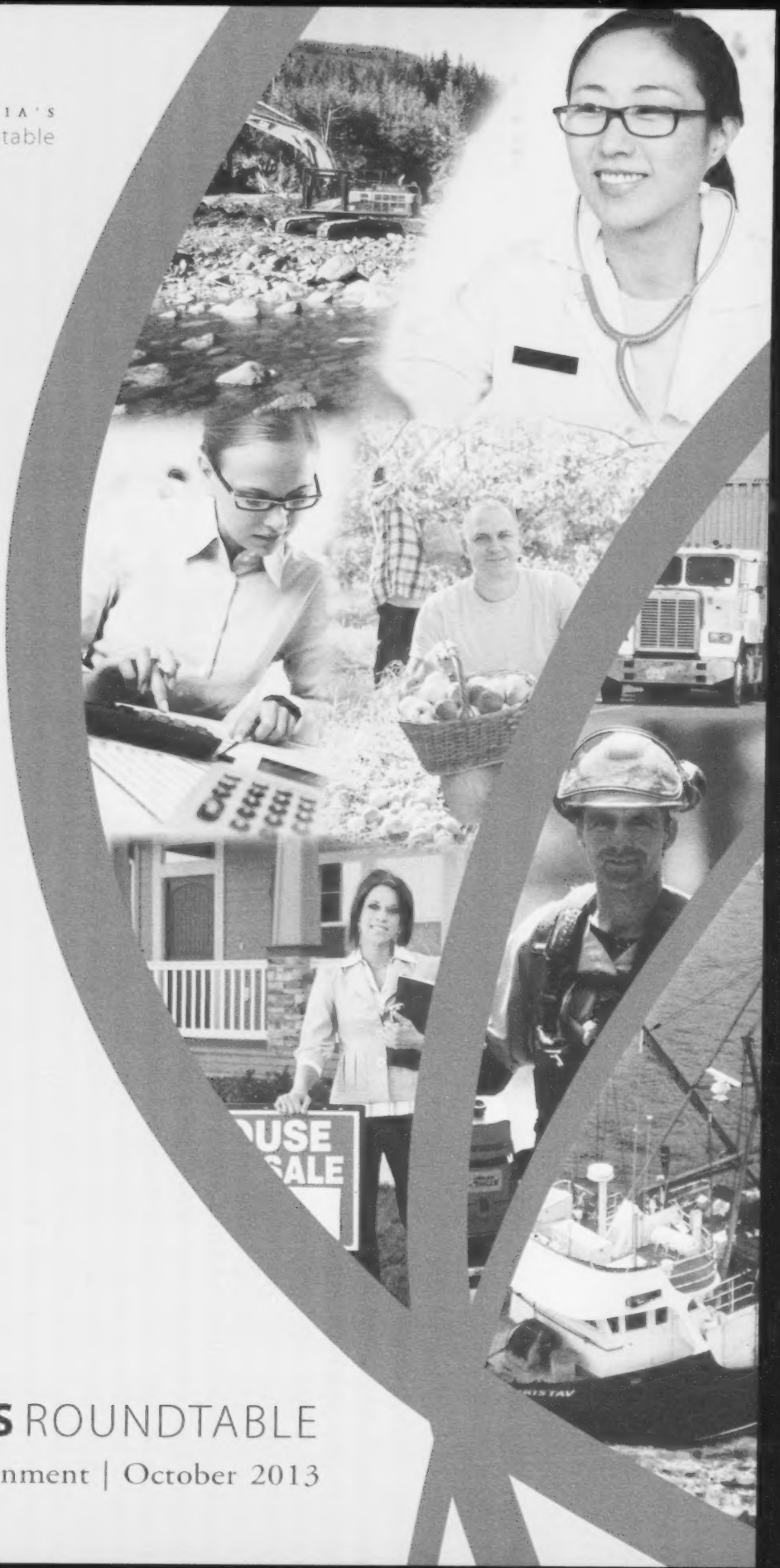
BRITISH COLUMBIA'S
Small Business Roundtable
est. 2005



SMALL BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

8th Annual Report to Government | October 2013

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A Message from the Roundtable

The Small Business Roundtable is the voice of small business to government in British Columbia. Members of the Roundtable represent multiple industries and regions across the province to ensure that key issues that affect small business success are addressed. Many of us are entrepreneurs and business owners and the rest of us are heads of organizations that represent small business owners across the province.

Throughout each year, we consult with small business owners across the province, listen to what they have to say and make recommendations to advise both government and small business on priorities and potential solutions to problems. The resources and initiatives highlighted in this report help address these concerns. The Annual Report also details Roundtable recommendations to support B.C.'s small business community.

The Roundtable would like to welcome our new Chair, Honourable Naomi Yamamoto, Minister of State for Tourism and Small Business. We look forward to working with her to help implement the *BC Small Business Accord*.

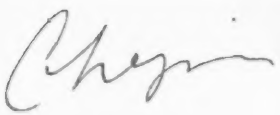
Here are some key highlights of our accomplishments over the past year:

- Completed Small Business Accord consultations with over 35,000 participants through regional small business consultations, online surveys and #BCBizChat Twitter Town Halls.
- Open for Business Awards: Awarded $10,000 to seven communities that have demonstrated how they support small business in their local area, and to help them bring forward Small Business Accord supporting initiatives.
- Continued to advocate for the expansion of the Mobile Business Licence Program. Three more agreements have been reached to help save businesses time and money that is better spent growing their business and enjoying their communities.
- Ensured that government kept their commitment to maintain a net-zero increase in regulations.
- Worked closely with government to communicate and reach the small business community to ensure a smooth transition back to PST.
- Worked with government to implement the Skills Training for Micro-Business Pilot to offer training to 1,200 owners of businesses with less than five employees.

While these are great accomplishments, as entrepreneurs, we are always striving to do more and push harder. With 98% of all business in B.C. having 50 employees or less, small business is big business in British Columbia. We see a lot more work ahead and will strive to achieve even more over the next year. Priorities we will focus on in the coming year include:

- Ensuring the principles of the *BC Small Business Accord* are upheld and the government delivers on its commitment to consider small business when drafting all policies and regulations.
- Pushing for further adoption of the Mobile Business Licence Program in more municipalities across the province.
- Working with the federal and provincial governments to allocate funds for training to help small businesses grow and become more sustainable and successful.
- Ensuring government keeps the commitment to make it easier for small businesses to sell their products or services to government.
- Supporting the building of a Mentorship Portal to help business owners find mentoring programs that best meet their needs.
- Continuing to press for Provincial Sales Tax (PST) reform.

If there are issues you or another small business you know wants to voice, we want to hear from you. Email us at **roundtablesecretariat@gov.bc.ca** and let us bring your voice to the Minister.



Vice-Chair
Roundtable Member since 2009

Who We Are... small business owners and advocates for B.C.'s small business community

Sue Adams
Managing Partner
Bevendale Enterprises
WHISTLER

Robert Fine
Director
Economic Development
Central Okanagan Economic
Development Commission
KELOWNA

David Littlejohn
Professional Campground
Operator
Living Forest RV Park/
Oceanside Campground
NANAIMO

Murray Presley
Senior Partner
Presley & Partners
COURTENAY

Sonia Virk
Lawyer and Partner
Virk Sabharwal, Lawyers
SURREY

MaryAnne Arcand
Executive Director
Central Interior
Logging Association
Chair, Carbon Offset
Aggregation Coop.
PRINCE GEORGE

Garth Frizzell
Founder and CEO
Terra Cognita
Software Systems Inc.
PRINCE GEORGE

Kelly McCormack
Owner
McCormack Management
BURNS LAKE

Mark Startup
Vice President
MySTORE
Retail Council of Canada
VANCOUVER

MJ Whitemarsh
CEO
Whitemarsh Enterprises Inc.
BURNABY

John Cameron
CEO
Rock Solid Business
Coaching Inc.
LANGLEY

Mike Klassen
Director of Provincial Affairs,
British Columbia, for the
Canadian Federation of
Independent Business (CFIB)
VANCOUVER

Cybele Negris
Vice-Chair
Small Business Roundtable
President and Co-Founder
Webnames.ca Inc.
VANCOUVER

Ian Tostenson
President and CEO
British Columbia Restaurant &
Food Services Association
VANCOUVER

Chief Judy Wilson
Neskonlith Indian Band (Skatsin)
CHASE

Cindy Choi
Partner
Chan Choi & Company
VICTORIA

For inquiries contact
roundtablesecretariat@gov.bc.ca

John Winter
President and CEO
British Columbia
Chamber of Commerce
VANCOUVER

What We Do...

The Small Business Roundtable was established in 2005 to provide British Columbia's small business community with a permanent voice in government through its mandate to:

1. **CHAMPION** small business interests in the province
2. **ENGAGE** in a dialogue with small businesses to identify key issues and opportunities
3. **ADVISE** government and small business to help small businesses grow and succeed

Honourable Naomi Yamamoto, Minister of State for Tourism and Small Business, acts as Chair of the Small Business Roundtable Board whose members include 17 recognized small business leaders within their small business communities. We would like to recognize the contributions of the Honourable Coralee Oakes, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, and Shafiq Jamal and Shachi Kurl who have retired from the Board in the past year.

Who We Represent...

We represent business owners with fewer than 50 employees or a business operated by a self-employed person with no paid help. The 385,900 small businesses operating in B.C. create local jobs and opportunities that strengthen the social fabric of the communities where they are based. In this report, we have included quotes from successful small businesses that were involved in the BC Small Business Accord consultations and continue to guide and inspire the Roundtable. You can read more about how they are succeeding at the BC Small Business Accord website: **www.jtst.gov.bc.ca/sbaccord/**

The Opportunity...

The newly created ***BC Small Business Accord*** (Accord) presents a unique opportunity for the Roundtable to build momentum in program and policy areas that impact British Columbia's small business community. For this report, we have highlighted several **active** Roundtable priorities that operate within the spirit of the Accord. To help implement the Accord, the Roundtable is advocating that the Province and local governments undertake specific measures that help create an "Open for Business" culture. By engaging with the small business community, the Roundtable will identify and support implementing current and new priorities that will help small businesses start up, grow and thrive.

Number of Small Businesses by Region, 2012

Region	Population[1]	# of Small Businesses
1. Vancouver Island/Coast	788,267	70,300
2. Mainland/Southcoast	2,805,568	224,700
3. Thompson-Okanagan	540,771	50,900
4. Kootenay	153,245	13,600
5. Cariboo	163,217	12,400
6. North Coast and 7. Nechako	98,990	7,000
8. Northeast	72,515	6,800
British Columbia	4,622,573	385,900[3]

[1]Source: BC Stats, Regional Population Estimates and Projections (2012 data)

[2]Statistical source: Small Business Profile, BC Stats, 2012

[3]Figures do not add to the total because the provincial total includes some businesses for which the region is unknown.

To learn more
www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca

The BC Small Business Accord...

The B.C. government created the Accord to improve interactions with small business and ensure government initiatives and services consider the needs of small business. The Roundtable is using the following Accord principles to develop specific actions that will support each principle and help government implement the Accord. The goal is to create benefits for small business that can be measured.

1. **Consider the needs and impacts** of small businesses in policy and program decisions to enhance business certainty, access to qualified labour, access to capital and technology adoption.
2. **Foster a regulatory environment** that small business can access, navigate and influence effectively and efficiently.
3. **Design government programs and resources** affecting small business so that they are well developed, accessible, properly funded and effectively communicated.
4. **Foster thoughtful collaboration** among all levels of government, including First Nations.
5. **Deploy educational and training programs** that are future-focused and aligned to meet the changing needs of small business and the labour talent it develops.
6. **Create long-term growth opportunities** for small business through government procurement.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC Small Business Accord

We are in business to create the most small business friendly jurisdiction in Canada

Principles

Consider the needs and impacts of small businesses in policy and program decisions to enhance business certainty, access to qualified labour, access to capital and technology adoption.

Foster a regulatory environment that small business can access, navigate and influence effectively and efficiently.

Design government programs and resources affecting small business so that they are well developed, accessible, properly funded and effectively communicated.

Foster thoughtful collaboration among all levels of government, including First Nations.

Deploy educational and training programs that are future-focused and aligned to meet the changing needs of small business and the labour talent it develops.

Create long-term growth opportunities for small business through government procurement.

To learn more
www.jtst.gov.bc.ca/sbaccord

ACCORD PRINCIPLE #1: Consider the needs and impacts of small businesses in policy and program decisions to enhance business certainty, access to qualified labour, access to capital and technology adoption.

To support implementation of this principle the Roundtable will work to ensure that the small business lens is applied to policy and programs that impact small businesses.

The following Roundtable initiatives help inform government and ensure that small businesses are being heard.

Annual Report to Government – This eighth Annual Report identifies priorities that reflect the issues and recommendations of the Roundtable. All recommendations are established to support small business now and into the future. All Roundtable reports are available on our website: **www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca**. The Roundtable is working towards identifying ways to measure progress on our priorities.

Regional Small Business Consultations – Since 2005, over 59 public consultations have been conducted reaching over 1,100 small business owners in the eight economic regions of British Columbia. This past year alone, the Roundtable helped promote the Accord consultations and helped bring over 100 small business owners into the conversation at regional consultations. For 2013, additional consultations are planned to gain important insight that will help improve small businesses' ability to sell their goods and services to government.

Small Business Twitter Town Halls – As part of the approach to ensure that more of the public could have a voice in the consultations, Twitter Town Halls were used to broaden the conversation on issues facing B.C.'s small business community.

Over the past year, Minister Naomi Yamamoto hosted three conversations; the first to discuss the Small Business Accord initiative, the second to seek information on challenges and opportunities facing women entrepreneurs in B.C., and the third to seek red tape reduction priorities identified by the small business community. The Roundtable participates and publicizes conversations through our **@SBRoundtableBC** Twitter feed, which can be viewed on our website **www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca**

"With small businesses as the Province's major private sector employer, providing 55% of private sector jobs, they generate economic activities that invigorate communities across British Columbia and help support government services. It is vitally important that government programs and policies that impact small businesses are designed to support small business activity not hinder it.

— Sue Adams (Whistler), Roundtable Member since 2008

Small businesses provided 55% of private sector jobs in 2012

– 2013 Small Business Profile

Quarterly Roundtable Meetings – The Roundtable meets quarterly to share best practices, discuss small business issues affecting their regions and provide advice to government on concerns that impact small businesses. Our quarterly e-bulletin, which we post to our website, highlights Roundtable discussions on priority initiatives that impact small businesses.

Recommendations to Achieve Accord Principle #1

Recommendations to Government

- It is an ongoing challenge for small business to maintain, much less increase, productivity. It requires continual investment in training, equipment and technology just to stay competitive. To help encourage B.C. small businesses to make those needed investments, the Roundtable recommends that the Province convene a government–industry working panel that will develop a productivity strategy. This strategy will detail a path to educate and encourage small businesses to address this challenge.
- The Roundtable applauds the continuing small business representation on British Columbia's three community development trusts and welcomes the opportunity to facilitate finding suitable small business representatives, as it provides a small business lens to initiatives under consideration that impact small business.
- Inform the Roundtable of any initiatives that are brought forward to help implement the BC Small Business Accord.
- During the ongoing regional consultations and Twitter Town Halls, the Roundtable solicits feedback from the small business community. The Roundtable recommends that the Province provide an opportunity for the Roundtable to present small businesses' recommendations for the Province's Core Review.

Mark and Sally Nairn (middle) presenting a cheque to the bowl for kids which is the major fund raiser for the local Big Brothers and Big Sisters. They were the major sponsor for three years running.

"Sending apprentices off to school for two months a year is a real hardship for the apprentice, their families and the employer. It's difficult to get training spaces scheduled and never comes at a convenient time. If they could do their training locally, a couple of days a week, the apprentice could stay home and work while completing school requirements."

– Mark Nairn, Beamac Installations (Williams Lake)

Recommendations to Small Business

- Engage with the Roundtable, and share your concerns and any insights that will help support an "Open for Business" culture.
- Use technology to increase awareness of opportunities and resources that are available from all levels of government or offered in partnership with agencies such as Small Business BC and the British Columbia Innovation Council.

ACCORD PRINCIPLE #2: Foster a regulatory environment that small business can access, navigate and influence effectively and efficiently.

To support implementation of this principle the Roundtable will promote the expanded adoption of small business friendly initiatives that simplify the regulatory environment.

The following successful initiatives were originally recommended at the BC Small Business Roundtable and have made it easier for small businesses to understand, navigate, access and influence the regulatory processes.

In 2012, there were more small businesses per capita (83.5/1000 people) than in any other province in Canada (avg. 69/1000 people)

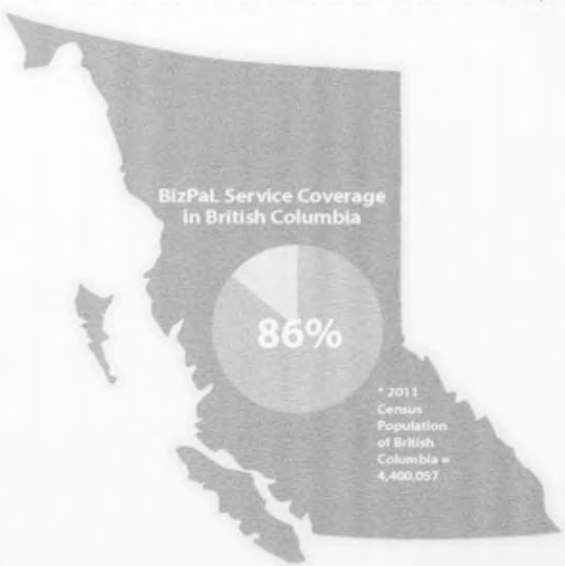
– 2013 Small Business Profile

The **B.C. Regulatory Reform Initiative Annual Report**, legislated in 2011, clearly demonstrates the Province's leadership in reducing red tape, improving accountability and making it easier for its citizens to access information to provide made-in-B.C. solutions. A copy of the 2012/13 report is available at: **www.gov.bc.ca/regulatoryreformbc**

"An 'Open for Business' culture removes excessive red tape to make it easier for businesses to innovate and grow their business. With a progressive business culture, small business owners are more likely to attract investment and retain or create jobs. Since the Roundtable's inception, red tape reduction and regulatory streamlining have been stated priorities in each of the previous seven Roundtable's Annual Reports and we've helped Government exceed its original mandate of 33% reduction in regulatory requirements (42% reduction achieved)."

– Murray Presley (Courtenay), Roundtable Member since 2005

Mobile Business Licence Expansion is actively endorsed by the Roundtable, through advocacy work and a Roundtable-funded promotional video. This initiative enables the Province to work with municipalities towards a single-business licence framework for mobile businesses, such as contractors or plumbers. Three new agreements have been reached in the past year and encompass 17 communities in the Lower Mainland, helping businesses in Tri-Cities, Fraser Valley and Metro-West. As one of the first jurisdictions in Canada to undertake this initiative, the Roundtable has helped remove another barrier that would otherwise hinder business. Check out our promotional video: **www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca**



BizPaL Expansion is a free online tool that produces a customized list of federal, provincial and municipal permits that are required in a business's specific location of operation, reducing the cost and complexity of doing business. The Roundtable supports expanding this initiative as the program demonstrates the benefits that can be realized when working in partnership with other government jurisdictions. **www.BCbizpal.ca**

Recommendations to Achieve Accord Principle #2

Recommendations to Government

- Highlight and track Core Review action items that impact the B.C. small business community, particularly in the B.C. Regulatory Reform Initiative 2013/2014 Annual Report.
- Government's Regulatory Reform Annual Report should identify legislation that was evaluated and improved by the Small Business Lens as part of government's ongoing reviews of legislation and regulations.
- Further facilitate Mobile Business Licence expansion by building on the recent success of the three agreements reached in Tri-Cities, Fraser Valley and Metro-West (17 communities). **www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/mobile.html**

Recommendations to Small Business

- Engage with the Roundtable to share concerns about regulatory burdens that make your business less competitive due to red tape.
- Subscribe to online government news feeds and industry association bulletins to stay informed of legislation and regulatory requirements so that you can find operational efficiencies when regulatory requirements change.
- Take an active part in red tape reduction. Visit **www.gov.bc.ca/regulatoryreformbc** to participate in discussions to help make regulations simpler and more efficient.

Mobile Business Licence Program Participants

"We are not just looking at today's work. We are constantly looking into the future and making judgements as to what will be relevant – be it regulatory requirements, new technologies or commodity trends – so we can make good decisions that allow us to prepare in advance of anticipated opportunities."

– Bob Redden, EDI Environmental (Prince George)

ACCORD PRINCIPLE #3: Design government programs and resources affecting small business so that they are well developed, accessible, properly funded and effectively communicated.

To support implementation of this principle the Roundtable will consult with small businesses to identify areas where small business awareness and access to government initiatives can be improved.

The Roundtable and its members continue to address this ongoing challenge by working with government on the following initiatives.

PST Reimplementation was a challenge that the Roundtable pursued aggressively. The Roundtable invited provincial representatives to make a presentation detailing their outreach activities. The Roundtable called for improved call-centre coverage and better use of small business stakeholders to host and market seminars. Additionally, Roundtable members directly, or through their extensive network, helped small businesses in their region and industry better understand and register for PST, with updated information provided at: **www.PSTinBC.ca**

LiveSmart BC: Small Business Program, as recommended by the Roundtable, requires that business energy advisors (BEA's) are hosted by industry associations or local chambers of commerce. By accessing their hosts' networks, BEA's were able to work with over 10,000 small business owners to improve their energy efficiency and reduce their energy costs by an equivalent of 13,500 homes for one year and $6 million, respectively. This year, the program was extended until March 31, 2014 with the eligibility criteria revised to allow businesses that spend under $200,000/year on electricity to work with the BEA's. **www.livesmartbc.ca**

"To ensure that small business can leverage well designed and resourced government supports, they must be adequately communicated during the design and implementation phases. Small business owners are often not aware of government supports available to them to assist them in all business phases as they are occupied with other aspects of running their business. The Roundtable is encouraged that government has acknowledged that an ongoing awareness strategy is required to promote government tools and services"

– Kelly McCormack (Burns Lake), Roundtable Member since 2008

In 2012 Small Businesses generated 26% of the Province's Gross Domestic Product

– 2013 Small Business Profile

Small Business Month, held in October, is an excellent opportunity for all jurisdictions and the small business community to showcase success stories and small business-friendly initiatives that demonstrate B.C.'s leadership. The Roundtable's Annual Report to Government is presented during Small Business Month. A calendar detailing Small Business Month activities is publicly available at: **www.smallbusinessbc.com**

Recommendations to Achieve Accord Principle #3

"I'm still small enough to be doing many things myself, so I'm doing business development, sales, marketing, managing my team and overseeing editorial."

– Annemarie Tempelman-Kluit, Yoyo Mama (Vancouver)

Recommendations to Government

- Provide an opportunity for the small business community to recommend priority program areas to be evaluated by the Core Review Panel. Any recommendations detailed in the report should be in plain language, with clear goals and metrics.
- Challenges do not go away after the start-up phase. Efforts to improve efficiency and productivity are ongoing. Small business owners could use help to attract investment and improve succession planning. The Roundtable recommends that the Province work with Small Business BC to develop a "Made in British Columbia" business evaluation tool and curriculum that will help small business owners build a stronger business.
- Improve the small business community's awareness of government initiatives that support small business. Use Twitter Town Halls to connect with the small business community. This dialogue can be used to learn what small businesses want to know, how the information should be packaged and where they would like to find the information when they need it (online, chambers of commerce, local economic development officers, Small Business BC, Service BC, Work BC, Community Futures, etc.).
- Small business must continually streamline and improve processes to stay competitive. The Roundtable recommends that the Province use the small business point of view to understand and improve interactions with government. Highlight provincial projects that are streamlining government processes and regulatory requirements to eliminate unnecessary red tape.
- The *Starting a Small Business Guide* should be updated with advice from the Roundtable to highlight key provincial initiatives, agencies, programs and services available to them.
- Further integrate current small business mentorship programs into a one-stop mentorship portal designed to assist business owners as they enhance and expand their current capabilities. This will facilitate an effective matching process between entrepreneurs and experienced business people. It will also help government free up resources to increase the reach of mentorship programs throughout the province or online.

Greg Munden

"Do your homework. Take advantage of government programs and mentorship opportunities to learn and prepare as much as you can before going forward."

– Greg Munden, Munden Ventures (Kamloops)

Recommendations to Small Business

- Connect with Small Business BC's (SBBC's) online resources to discover programs and services that may benefit your small business. SBBC also maintains an online and publicly accessible calendar for small business-related activities.
- Participate in Small Business Month through events that are organized by government, affiliated agencies, chambers of commerce and industry associations.
- Contact Small Business BC, your local chambers of commerce or the Women's Enterprise Centre to help your business identify local mentors, incentives and programs that help attract or retain businesses in your community.

ACCORD PRINCIPLE #4: Foster thoughtful collaboration among all levels of government, including First Nations.

To support implementation of this principle the Roundtable will identify policies and programs that would benefit from improved government coordination.

To improve the climate for collaboration, Roundtable members are working through their regional and industry networks to build collaboration among levels of government to improve participation in the following:

The 2013 "Open for Business" Awards (formerly the Most Small Business Friendly Community Award) provides an opportunity for the Roundtable to recognize communities that are making it easier for small business to do business in their communities. To further support this award, the Province provided the Roundtable with a $200,000 grant to provide up to 20 awards of $10,000 each. It is intended that the financial reward will be provided to winning communities to assist in funding a proposed small business friendly initiative. For 2013, a record 39 applications were reviewed by the Roundtable and each was evaluated on local measures aligned with the Small Business Accord principles. On September 19, 2013, seven winners were celebrated at an award ceremony at the Union of B.C. Municipalities convention in Vancouver.

Congratulations to the 2013 Award Winners:

1. Central Saanich
2. Chilliwack
3. Coquitlam
4. Fort St. James
5. Kelowna
6. City of Langley
7. Penticton

The Venture Connects Project is funded by the federal government and the Province to provide preparation and matching services to business sellers and potential buyers that help keep viable businesses in their communities. Succession planning is a key concern of small business owners looking to sell their business or transition out of the workforce. In addition to Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast, this pilot project has expanded and is now offered to businesses located in Hope, the Thompson/Okanagan, and the western portion of the Columbia-Shuswap. **www.ventureconnect.ca**

Almost 42% of the total goods exported from the province are shipped by small business, accounting for approximately $12.2 billion worth of merchandise exported to international destinations

– 2013 Small Business Profile

"A common frustration expressed by small business owners is a lack of government coordination between the levels of government and their agencies. This makes it challenging for small businesses to be aware of the small business programs available to them and how to best access them. The small business community has benefitted from Roundtable supported measures that involve collaboration between governments such as the Mobile Business Licence Program."

– Ian Tostenson (Vancouver), Roundtable Member since 2005

Recommendations to Achieve Accord Principle #4

Recommendations to Government

- Small business owners are retiring at an ever-increasing rate and many small businesses still have not developed a succession plan. Resources should be expanded and developed in collaboration with the federal government to encourage small business owners to educate themselves on the importance of succession planning and offer flexible tools to small business owners.
- Small Business Walks that are hosted by chambers of commerce and attended by local government officials have been recognized by the Roundtable as an informal and effective way to connect and collaborate with the small business community. They offer a chance to highlight the challenges and opportunities facing small business owners. The Province should encourage Small Business Walks and encourage provincial staff to attend, as Small Business Walks are good opportunities to forge better partnerships with local governments to help small business.
- Continue to negotiate the Labour Market Agreement renewal with the federal government to ensure more funding is available to develop and expand training program offerings targeted to small businesses.

"We received an invitation from the Turkish government to submit a proposal to participate in what is today the biggest Interactive Educational Project worldwide. With the support of B.C. government and the federal government through different programs, iBoard entered into a Joint Venture Agreement with Termikel, one of the leading manufacturers of appliances in Turkey."

– Antonio Oquendo – iBoard (Victoria)

Recommendations to Small Business

- Engage with the Roundtable to share local measures that you think distinguish your community as "Open for Business". The Roundtable will use social media to share successful measures and encourage communities to apply for the 2014 Open for Business Awards.
- Use technology to gather information about your industry. Social media is an excellent tool to stay current with industry trends and events that may be of interest to your small business.
- Use technology to access online support programs that are available from all levels of government or offered in partnership with other agencies.

The seven recipients of the Open for Business awards with Ministers Naomi Yamamoto and Coralee Oakes. Winners of the Open for Business awards were honoured at a ceremony during the UBCM Annual Convention on September 19, 2013.

ACCORD PRINCIPLE #5: Deploy educational and training programs that are future-focused and aligned to meet the changing needs of small business and the labour talent it develops.

To help government implement this principle the Roundtable will advise government on how small business workforce programs could be improved to meet changing regional needs.

The Roundtable is looking forward to working with government to help establish a mentoring portal as part of its Small Business Accord commitment and would like to highlight that the following programs can continue to evolve to meet the needs of small business:

Small Business BC (SBBC) is supported by the Province and the federal government to provide entrepreneurs with the information and guidance they need to build a solid foundation for their business. Roundtable Member **Cybele Negris** is our representative on the SBBC Board of Directors and provides insight into technology trends and how small businesses can incorporate technology to improve their business. No matter what stage or what skill level, SBBC assists with guided support, one-on-one coaching services, education, business plan reviews and dozens of free resources designed to save entrepreneurs time and money. **www.smallbusinessbc.ca**

Junior Achievement BC (JABC) has developed an extensive volunteer network to help 30,000 students explore entrepreneurship in a school setting or through new online supports. Roundtable Member and Certified General Accountant **Cindy Choi** is our representative on the JABC Board of Directors to provide insight into interactions with government and financial literacy. With the help of 750 volunteers, JABC is presently engaged with 50 school districts and has been focused on using the most recent provincial contribution of $1 million to increase their reach into the school districts and First Nations communities. **www.jabc.com**

"Education and training programs directed to small businesses need to be carefully crafted and marketed in order to meet the ever changing needs of the small business owner/operator. A recognition by trainers, whether they be part of public or private providers, that the content and the delivery of successful programs must take into account the limited availability and time commitment business owners have. Basic training, in the essential business skills, is just as critical as skilled trades training and will represent a quality investment in the success of that business. Productivity and competitiveness are key issues in need of urgent attention in order to make B.C.'s economy responsive to training investment."

– John Winter (Vancouver), Roundtable Member since 2006

In 2012, small businesses provided 31% of all wages to workers in British Columbia

– 2013 Small Business Profile

Skills Training for Micro-Business Pilot offered by the BC Chamber of Commerce has received $3.1 million in pilot funding from the Province to improve business efficiency and productivity for businesses with five employees or less. Focused on business owners who have no formal training beyond high school, $1,500 can be applied to upgrade business skills such as accounting, marketing, leadership and human resource management. Applications can be submitted before December 31, 2013 with a target of 1,200 applicants through to March 31, 2014. **www.bcmicrobusiness.com**

Recommendations to Achieve Accord Principle #5

Recommendations to Government

- Work with Junior Achievement BC to recognize schools and districts that offer programs that inspire future entrepreneurs. In particular, recognize the importance of industry-supported career fairs that promote science and mathematics to future entrepreneurs.
- Support technology adoption by First Nations through the development of a well-communicated strategy that accelerates training and encourages connectivity. Programs currently offered can be easily enhanced to promote technology adoption in First Nation communities.
- Support training and labour market development by creating "sector" or "business-cluster" specific program offerings that access funding from Labour Market Agreements and Aboriginal Training and Employment Agreements.
- Continue to support small business programs like the *Skills Training for Micro-Business Pilot* that help small business owners operate their small business more efficiently.

"Find the right product and consistently improve, keep educating the key people in the company."

– Veronika Stevenson, SkyTrek Adventure Park (Revelstoke)

Recommendations to Small Business

- Engage with the Roundtable to identify training gaps, as the Roundtable can help identify programs that are designed to fill those gaps. If no program exists, the Roundtable will advise the Province on strategies to fill the gap.
- Explore creating co-op, internships or job-shadowing opportunities with your local school district or post-secondary institutions so students get exposure to trades and other local industry sectors before they graduate.
- Consider volunteering with Junior Achievement BC to deliver entrepreneurship programs within the classroom, or become a mentor.

Honourable Naomi Yamamoto with the winners of "The Next Generation Leaders Forum Award". The students are: Jotham Chow, Abby Muscutt, Shirley Guo. They attended a Junior Achievement Student Forum in Halifax this past summer.

ACCORD PRINCIPLE #6: Create long-term growth opportunities for small business through government procurement.

To help government implement this principle, the Roundtable will look for and advise government of opportunities to help small business do business with government.

The Roundtable is encouraged by the Province's renewed commitment to work with Roundtable members to reduce barriers to government procurement for small business through the following small business initiatives:

Implementing the *Small Business – Doing Business with Government Project* will help small businesses by identifying and breaking down barriers to government procurement. The Roundtable is pleased that on August 29th, the Province appointed George Farkas as executive lead for this project. As a senior official in government with personal experience working for his own family's small business, Mr. Farkas will consult directly with small businesses and Roundtable members to generate ideas to improve access to government contracts and identify opportunities to remove barriers that prevent or discourage small businesses from competing for provincial contracts. The final report will include recommendations to make it easier for small businesses to compete for and win government contracts.

"Selling local goods and services to government is an excellent opportunity for small businesses to demonstrate their exceptional ability to innovate and gain experience at responding to Requests for Proposals. A common concern raised by small business owners across Canada is that small businesses are having trouble penetrating non-traditional markets because their goods and services are not being used domestically. By making it easier for small businesses to sell to government they will be better able to compete for business that was previously out of reach".

– Chief Judy Wilson (Chase), Roundtable Member Since 2008

Small business is also a vital source of innovation – In 2012, approximately 96% of high technology businesses in British Columbia were small business

– 2013 Small Business Profile

Increasing small business procurement by 20% will open up new opportunities for small businesses to participate in and win government contracts. This work will examine and improve procurement policy and practices throughout government, and use information gathered through the *Small Business – Doing Business with Government Project* to achieve this goal. The Roundtable is pleased to support this work and will play an active advisory role in the development and implementation of related government initiatives.

Streamlining government procurement processes and improving the procurement process for contracts under $250,000 will help ensure that small businesses can compete for government contracts on a more level playing field. The Roundtable has focused on red tape reduction since its inception and is pleased that this type of policy work is now being expanded to include processes where goods and services are being sold to government. Working with the Province to find ways to reduce the Request for Proposals (RFP) document requirement to two pages for contracts under $250,000 will be a priority for the Roundtable over the next year.

Recommendations to Achieve Accord Principle #6

Recommendations to Government

- Work with local governments to bring more transparency and efficiency to government procurement opportunities in British Columbia. The Province must improve economies-of-scale and cost control and better identify small businesses that can provide goods and services locally. The Roundtable recommends that the Province convene a panel to discuss how governments can collaborate to increase value for money.
- Inform small business owners and industry associations of government official(s) and resources that can help improve the procurement process for small business.
- Design procurement documents in a way that will encourage bids from small businesses. This will support the Province's commitment to reduce the size of RFPs to two pages for contracts under $250,000.
- Specify the milestones the Province will achieve, and when they will be achieved by, to meet its goal to increase small business-awarded contracts by 20%.

"I have two younger partners who are very bright and technologically astute. With all of the interest in our area and our local knowledge, I can see our firm working with other medium to large engineering firms taking on a key role in participating in the building of the LNG (liquified natural gas) projects."

– Robin Lapointe, LEL Engineering (Kitimat)

Recommendations to Small Business

- Engage with the Roundtable to share your concerns and any insights that will help improve small business' ability to access government procurement opportunities.
- Provide input directly to the *Small Business – Doing Business with Government Project* at **www.jtst.gov.bc.ca/selltobcgov/**
- Use technology to find online resources that will help small businesses build competitive and innovative bid packages.
- Build partnerships or consortiums with other B.C.-based small businesses to help find the alignments and expertise necessary to qualify for procurement opportunities.

Our Commitments Moving Forward...

To meet its mandate, the Roundtable will:

1. **Support "Small Business Accord" implementation** to improve small business competitiveness.
2. **Increase awareness of provincial programs** that improve small business productivity and reduce the cost of doing business.
3. **Support "Mobile Business Licence" expansion** as every agreement reached adds momentum towards the fight against red tape.
4. **Develop and communicate metrics** that measure progress on key initiatives the Roundtable supports.
5. **Use regional consultations and "Twitter Town Halls"** to stay current with emerging small business issues using the #BCBizChat hashtag.
6. **Use social media and e-bulletins and the Roundtable website** to keep the small business community aware of Roundtable activities.
7. **Update the Province's "Starting a Small Business Guide"** with input from the Roundtable members to improve awareness of provincial programs, agencies and partnerships that deliver value to the small business community.

Resources for Small Business...

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S Small Business Roundtable

www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca

LiveSmart BC

www.livesmartbc.ca/incentives/small-business

Junior Achievement CANADA

http://british-columbia.jacan.org

CANADA STARTS HERE BC JOBS PLAN

www.bcjobsplan.ca

BizPaL Business starts here

http://bcbizpal.ca

SMALL BUSINESS BC

www.smallbusinessbc.ca

BCeID

www.bceid.ca

WorkBC Employment Services Centre

www.workbc.ca

BRITISH COLUMBIA

www.gov.bc.ca

TRADE START.CA

www.tradestart.ca

fwe british columbia FORUM FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

www.fwe.ca

WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE CENTRE

www.womensenterprise.ca

ABSN

www.absn.ca

BCIC BC INNOVATION COUNCIL

www.bcic.ca

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